

December 2002

Livestock and Seed Programs
Agriculture Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Stop 0249, Room 2092-S
Washington, DC 20250-0249
Fax: 202/720-3499
foodsafetytechnology@usda.gov

To whom it may concern:

I strongly oppose the use of irradiation on meat served to children in the National School Lunch Program. When meat is blasted with the equivalent of over 100 million chest x-rays, new chemicals are formed that have never been tested or even described. In addition, like cooking, irradiation damages vitamins and creates free radicals.

Despite irradiation advocates' claims, irradiated foods have not been shown to be safe. There are no long-term human studies and no studies on normal children. The FDA never did the battery of tests suggested by the National Academy of Sciences that the FDA has adopted as the standard for testing new food additives. In addition, the studies the FDA used to approve irradiation over the years are mostly deficient: some suggested health effects or were conducted at lower than maximum doses.

I am not at all confident in the safety of this technology and I believe children should not be exposed to it without their parents' consent. But irradiated food in schools need not be labeled, which obstructs parents' right to know what their children are eating.

I am opposed to irradiation of meat as well because it is a band-aid on feces (which is manure) contaminated meat. Our children should be eating meat that is clean from the source, not irradiated feces.

Yours truly,

Nancy Springer
6300 Pheasant Ct.
Edina MN 55438

12/13/02